



# News Release

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**Southwest Region (Arizona • New Mexico • Oklahoma • Texas)** <http://southwest.fws.gov>

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## **POST-DELISTING MONITORING PLAN FOR THE CONCHO WATER SNAKE ANNOUNCED, PUBLIC COMMENTS SOUGHT**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) published a Notice of Availability in the Federal Register today announcing the Post-Delisting Monitoring Plan (PDMP) for the Concho water snake (*Nerodia paucimaculata*). A 30-day public review and comment period will begin today and all comments must be received by October 23, 2009.

The Endangered Species Act (Act) requires that species delisted due to recovery be monitored a minimum of 5 years after delisting. The draft PDMP describes the methods we propose to monitor the status of the snake and its habitat, in cooperation with the State of Texas and other conservation partners, for a 15-year period. The draft PDMP also provides a strategy for identifying and responding to any future population declines or habitat alterations.

The Concho water snake is a reptile endemic to central Texas. This snake is small compared to most other water snakes, with adults rarely exceeding 3 feet in total length. It is a nonvenomous snake that has four rows of alternating dark brown spots or blotches on its back, two rows on each side. The coloration on its back is similar to a checkerboard of dark brown spots on a gray, brown, or reddish-brown color. The Concho Water Snake has a light pinkish or orange belly that is unmarked or has somewhat indistinct spots along the sides.

The Service listed this species as threatened on September 3, 1986, due to threats of habitat modification and destruction. On July 8, 2008, the Service published a proposed rule to remove the Concho water snake from the list of threatened species. This proposal was based on the best available scientific and commercial data, including new information, indicating the Concho water snake has recovered because threats have been eliminated or reduced to the point that it no longer meets the definition of threatened or endangered under the Act. The Service is in the process of making a final determination on whether or not to delist the Concho water snake.

The draft PDMP is available for review on the Internet at <http://endangered.fws.gov> and <http://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/AustinTexas/>.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific

excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit [www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov).

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